DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 028 748 HE 000 889

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Comparison of Characteristics of Selected College and University Honors Programs Throughout the United States.

South Carolina Univ., Columbia.
Pub Date [Mar 67]
Note-8p.
EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.50
Descriptors-*Academic Achievement, *Course Evaluation, *Higher Education, *Honors Curriculum, *Liberal Arts Majors

A series of evaluative studies were conducted of the honors program of the College of Arts and Sciences of the University of South Carolina (USC) by the university's Counseling Bureau. In order to compare USC's honors program, which began in 1965, with those of other institutions, a questionnaire was mailed to 315 public and private colleges and universities in the US that had liberal arts programs and a student enrollment of 2,000 or more. This paper contains tables providing the data collected from 292, or 92.7% of the institutions, 184 of which have honors programs. The data cover the types of honors programs, the criteria for admission to them, and the academic level of students when admitted. The tables also present information on the minimum GPR required to remain in the 184 programs, the attrition rate of 47 programs in 46 states, grading systems used, and the decades in which 166 programs were established. The Appendix lists the states and territories included in the 5 regions surveyed, institutions which plan to start honors programs in the near future and others that have discontinued honors programs. A copy of the questionnaire is also appended. (WM)

ED028748

COMPARISON OF CHARACTERISTICS OF SELECTED COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAMS THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES*

A Project Of

The Counseling Bureau

Division of Student Affairs

University of South Carolina

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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*Referred to as QR 5100 in the American Council on Education's Report on Questionnaires, No. 116 (March, 1967).

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HONORS QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

The University of South Carolina's College of Arts and Science initiated an Honors Program in the Fall of 1965. Soon thereafter, the Counseling Bureau undertook a series of evaluative studies of this program. In order to provide comparisons between the Honors Program at U.S.C. and others around the United States, a questionnaire* was mailed to all colleges and universities of 2000 or more students with Liberal Arts Programs, listed in the Fall 1966 volume of Accredited Institutions of Higher Learning (ACE). Following is a summary of the information derived from the returned questionnaires.

Total Mailed: 315
Total Received: 292
Percent Response: 92.7%
Number of States Represented: 48**
Mailing Date: January, 1967

TOTAL HONORS PROGRAMS REPORTED

ITEM	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	TOTAL
Number Responding	192	100	292
Number Reporting Honors Programs	121	63	184
% Reporting Honors Programs	63%	63%	63%

REGIONAL BREAKDOWN OF HONORS PROGRAMS REPORTED

REGION***	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS RESPONDING		
	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	TOTAL
A. North Central	52	17	69
B. Southern	33	11	44
C. Middle States	10	21	31
D. Northwest	12	4	16
E. New England	7	6	13
F. Western	7	4	11

* Sample of Questionnaire included in Appendix

** The two states from which no educational institution responded: Delaware and Maine; also, three territories are not represented: The Canal Zone, Guam, and the Virgin Islands.

*** States and Territories included in each Region are listed in the Appendix

1. Types of Honors Programs Reported

TYPE OF PROGRAM	NUMBER
General Honors Programs in Operation	184
Departmental Honors Programs in Operation	28
Planning to Institute Honors Program in the Near Future	16*
Had Honors Program at One Time, Have Discontinued	3*
No Honors Programs and No Plans to Institute One in the Near Future	61

2. Academic Level of Students when Admitted to General Honors Program

CLASSIFICATION	NUMBER	%
Freshmen	137**	74.5
Sophomores	15***	8.2
Juniors	26	14.1
Seniors	6	3.3

Note: % here is of Total General Honors Programs Reported (N=184)

* Listed in Appendix

** 14 Schools included here also allow entrance after 1st semester, freshman year

*** 1 School included here allows entrance only after 1st semester, sophomore year

3. Criteria for Admission to Honors Programs

The various items reported for Honors Program admittance are used in many different combinations. It is not practical to list all the different combinations found (45 for entering Freshmen; 17 for those admitted above Freshman level). Therefore, the individual items reported are listed below.*

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA	ADMISSION OF FRESHMEN		ADMISSION AFTER FRESHMAN YEAR	
	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%
High School Grades	101	35.4%	3	1.7%
Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)	58	20.4%	3	1.7%
American College Test (ACT)	29	10.2%	2	1.2%
High School Recommendation	36	12.7%		
Interview	24	8.4%		
Letter of Application	3	1.1%	11	6.4%
Merit Exam	4	1.4%	3	1.7%
Essay	10	3.5%	1	0.6%
Exemption (placement) tests	5	1.8%		
Institutional Tests	3	1.1%		
State-Administered Tests	3	1.1%		
Unspecified Entrance Tests	9	3.2%	3	1.7%
College GPR			97	56.4%
Faculty Recommendation			49	28.5%

* Twenty universities responded with unquantifiable answers

4. Minimum GPR required to remain in the 184 General Honors Programs reported (all converted to the 4.0 system for comparison with the University of South Carolina's requirements)

RANGE	NUMBER	%
2.00-2.75	6	3.3%
3.00	93	50.5%
3.10-3.60	44	23.9%
No Response	41	22.3%

5. Attrition rate of 47 Honors Programs in 46 states, presented by Region

REGION	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS USED IN COMPUTING PERCENT ATTRITION			MEAN NUMBER OF YEARS BASED ON	PERCENT ATTRITION*
	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	TOTAL		
A. North Central	16	5	21	4.0	15.8
B. Southern	6	3	9	3.7	27.6
C. Middle States	3	2	5	3.4	16.0
D. Northwest	3	2	5	3.4	22.2
E. New England	2	2	4	4.0	15.6
F.--Western	2	1	3	3.0	32.0

* Of the 184 schools which responded to this section of the questionnaire, only 47 (25.6%) gave a quantifiable answer; therefore, these responses cannot be accepted as representative of the true attrition rate in these areas but only as an approximation thereof.

6. Grading systems used by 189 Honors Programs

CRITERIA	%
1. Grading system same as in non-honors classes	50.5
2. Distribution of letter grades at higher grade level than in non-honors classes	11.4
3. Different from non-honors classes, but unspecified	5.9
4. Instructor's perogative	4.3
5. Pass-fail	3.3
6. Satisfactory-unsatisfactory	2.2
7. Ungraded	2.2
8. Responses not quantifiable	20

7. Decades in which 166 General Honors Programs were begun*

DECADE	NUMBER
1920-29	1
1930-39	5
1940-49	4
1950-59	46
1960-66	110
Uncertain of starting date	18

* One program started in 1917 (UNC, Chapel Hill, N. C. - Departmental Honors)

APPENDIX

1. States and Territories included in each Region:

A--New England	C--Southern	D--North Central	E--Northwest
Connecticut	Alabama	Arizona	Alaska
*Maine	Florida	Arkansas	Idaho
Massachusetts	Georgia	Colorado	Montana
New Hampshire	Kentucky	Illinois	Nevada
Rhode Island	Louisiana	Indiana	Oregon
Vermont	Mexico	Iowa	Utah
	Mississippi	Kansas	Washington
B--Middle States	North Carolina	Michigan	
	South Carolina	Minnesota	F--Western
*Delaware	Tennessee	Missouri	
District of Columbia	Texas	Nebraska	California
*Canal Zone	Virginia	New Mexico	*Guam
Maryland		North Dakota	Hawaii
New Jersey		Ohio	
New York		Oklahoma	
Pennsylvania		South Dakota	
Puerto Rico		West Virginia	
*Virgin Islands		Wisconsin	
		Wyoming	

2. From Table 1, Types of Honors Programs Reported

   a. Schools which are planning to institute Honors Programs in the near future:

   Commonwealth of Pennsylvania College, West Chester, Pennsylvania
   Memphis State University, Memphis, Tennessee
   Minot State College, Minot, North Dakota
   Monmouth College, West Long Branch, New Jersey
   North Michigan University, Marquette, Michigan
   Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, Washington
   Pennsylvania Military College, Chester, Pennsylvania
   University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio
   University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky
   University of Montana, Missoula, Montana
   U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland
   Weber State College, Ogden, Utah
   Wilkes College, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania
   Wisconsin State University (the Eau Clair, Stevens Point, and Oshkosh campuses)

   b. Schools which have discontinued Honors Programs:

   Austin Peay State College, Clarksville, Tennessee
   Catholic University of Puerto Rico, Ponce, Puerto Rico
   University of the Pacific, Stockton, California

* No Educational Institution Responded from these areas.

QUESTIONNAIRE--HONORS PROGRAM DIRECTORS

To be completed by Director of Honors or other appropriate official:

(1) This institution has an Honors Program: Yes _____ No _____

NOTE: If no, is it planning to initiate one in the future? Yes _____ No _____

If so, when? _____

(2) At what academic level are students admitted to this program (as freshmen, sophomores, etc.)?

_____

_____

(3) What are the criteria for admission to this program? (If possible, list in order of importance.)

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

(4) What is your program's standard of success? (i.e., grade-point-ratio required to continue in the program) If given as grade-point-ratios please indicate on what scale (3, 4 point, etc.)

_____

_____

(5) a. Please list below the number of students admitted to your program each year since its inception (or for the past five years):
b. Please indicate how many students in each year-group did not meet the minimum criteria to remain in the program:

a. _____ b. _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

(6) Do teachers of Honors classes report a different grading method for these classes than they use with other classes?

_____

(7) When did the Honors Program first begin at your institution?

_____

Thank you very much for the time and effort expended in answering the above.